

foundations and individual private landowners to create science-based conservation solutions that benefit nature and enhance the well being of people who depend on vital natural resources for their lives and livelihoods.

The Nature Conservancy works to improve river life, water quality and restore aquatic ecosystems through projects along the Illinois River including the preserves at Emiquon and Spunky Bottoms, the Cache River in Southern Illinois and the Mackinaw River in central Illinois. By using the best available science, The Nature Conservancy works to conserve our grasslands, prairies, forests at places like Kankakee Sands, Indian Boundary Prairies, Nachusa Grasslands, Chinquapin, and the Illinois Ozarks.

The Nature Conservancy is a founding member of Chicago Wilderness, a consortium of more than 200 public and private organizations working together to protect, restore, study and manage the natural ecosystems of the Chicago region, contribute to the conservation of global biodiversity, and enrich local residents' quality of life. In addition, The Nature Conservancy has spearheaded and supported various state policy initiatives that made meaningful contributions to Illinois natural resource management including public funding initiatives, and the Volunteer Stewardship Network to help public and private landowners manage their lands by removing invasive species, collecting native seeds, conducting prescribed burns, reducing pollution and managing precious parcels of land and waterways, and assisting with environmental youth education programs.

The Nature Conservancy's Board of Trustees and staff use a non-confrontational and collaborative approach to their work with all sectors of society to achieve meaningful conservation results in Illinois. That is why The Nature Conservancy is a leader in raising awareness of the benefits of nature, conservation and sound environmental practices among Illinois communities, elected officials, and the public at large.

I am proud to recognize the contributions The Nature Conservancy has made to significantly improve Illinois landscape and waterways, and congratulate The Nature Conservancy, Illinois Chapter, for its 50 years of conservation work in the State and applaud their efforts across the United States and around the globe to protect and conserve the biodiversity of the Earth.

IN HONOR OF JOSEPH PEZZINI

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2007

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, Members of the House, I rise today to honor Mr. Joseph Pezzini, a quiet and unassuming man who has become one of the seminal leaders in our Nation's fresh produce industry. The occasion for this recognition is Joe's departure from the chairmanship of the Salinas, California, based Grower Shipper Association. His work as chairman over the course of the past year, particularly around the issues of food safety, has contributed tremendously to the continued health and vitality of the American fresh produce industry.

Joe is a senior officer with Ocean Mist Farms, the leading U.S. producer and shipper of fresh artichokes. Along with a team of highly skilled and dedicated colleagues, Joe helps produce and ship high quality artichokes, lettuce, broccoli, spinach, and a variety of other specialty vegetable crops. All things that the federal government says we should eat more of. If you have ever eaten an artichoke, Joe likely had a hand in putting it on your plate. If you have never eaten an artichoke, then Joe would like to speak with you. But Joe's business acumen only begins his catalogue of achievements.

In 2006, Joe became president of the Grower Shipper Association, which serves as local and regional voice of the California Central Coast's large and dynamic produce industry. His focus was predominantly on local and regional issues. Then, last year on September 14, FDA advised consumers to avoid eating fresh spinach because it had been linked to an outbreak of E. coli. In a matter of minutes, Joe transformed himself from just a Salinas Valley business leader to the national face of the fresh produce industry. As a prominent spinach producer himself whose product remained unlinked to the outbreak and the Grower Shipper Association chairman, Joe became the natural spokesperson for the produce industry. Every major news outlet in the country wanted to speak with a Salinas Valley farmer. Amid all the commotion and frenzy, Joe remained the calm and credible voice, always speaking to realities of farming and his industry's concern for safety whether to a national news anchor or a local beat reporter. In the months since, Joe has taken a leading role in the produce industry's response to the crisis. He helped shape and now chairs the State of California's new leafy green food safety marketing agreement.

Joe's work has not only benefited the producers in my Central California district, but fresh produce farmers across the country. In recognition of his work, The Packer, a leading Produce Industry trade publication, recently honored Joe as its Produce Man of the Year. This honor is clearly well deserved.

Madam Speaker, please allow me to convey to Mr. Pezzini this body's gratitude for his vision, hard work and grace under fire on behalf of fresh produce consumers and producers everywhere.

IN RECOGNITION OF THOMAS P. CORRIGAN

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2007

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Thomas P. Corrigan, the 2007 Fairview Park Citizen of the Year. Tom has been a tireless advocate for Fairview Park, and has devoted hundreds of volunteer hours in service to his neighbors.

Tom has been an active leader in the community for many years, and has been a fantastic influence in the lives of hundreds of Fairview Park youth. He has provided valuable leadership to St. Angela Cub Scout Pack 401, sponsored School to Work programs for Fairview Park High School and Ohio Boys Town, has coordinated numerous fundraising pro-

grams for Fairview Park students, and chaired levy campaigns to ensure that the schools have adequate resources to educate Fairview Park children.

Hardly a person to temper his enthusiasm for his community, Tom has also contributed significant time and resources to Fairview Park's economic prosperity and social growth. For many years Tom served as a board member for the Chamber of Commerce, and currently serves on the board of the Fairview Municipal Foundation. He has been active with the Business Advisory Council, and has been instrumental in the growth and success of Summerfest. He builds benches and playgrounds, chairs golf outings, and even plays the bagpipes.

His dedication to Northeastern Ohio has been an inspiration to all that know him. In addition to being an invaluable asset to Fairview Park, Tom is a doting father to Elisabeth, Rebecca, and Christopher, as well as a loving husband to Jeanne Ann.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring Thomas P. Corrigan as the 2007 Fairview Park Citizen of the Year. His reliability, thoughtfulness and selflessness have been integral to the success of Fairview Park and the development of the city's vibrant personality. May Fairview Park continue to thrive from his efforts.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2007

Ms. CARSON. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, May 16, 2007, I was unable to vote on rollcall Nos. 350 and 356. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on both.

TRIBUTE TO PRUE AND AMI ROSENTHAL

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2007

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Prue and Ami Rosenthal of Ann Arbor, MI. For 30 years the Rosentals have given much to the City of Ann Arbor and its community. Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal are the 2007 recipients of the Washtenaw County Jewish Federation's Humanitarian Award, the highest honor the Jewish Federation bestows upon recipients.

The Rosentals were married in Massachusetts in 1962 and came to Ann Arbor in 1977. For these 30 years the duo of Prue and Ami have served Ann Arbor's Jewish community. Prue has spread her time and efforts among several organizations, such as a volunteer for the Beth Israel Congregation, Hadassah, the Jewish Federation, as well as serving as president of the Hebrew Day School. Prue is also a student of art history and has devoted herself to the University of Michigan (UM) Museum of Art, currently serving on the National Advisory Board and contributing her talent and knowledge to the creation of the new museum. She has also served on the board of

the University Musical Society for 7 years, 3 as the Chair.

Ami came to Ann Arbor after he was recruited from Harvard to direct the division of Pediatric Cardiology at the University of Michigan Medical Center. Since then he has established an international reputation for this remarkable program and created a network of 13 pediatric cardiology clinics throughout Michigan, using both his medical knowledge and his personal humor to help patients. He is now instrumentally involved in the development of the new Mott Children's hospital.

Prue and Ami have placed tremendous emphasis on the future of their community and together they helped found Save a Heart Foundation to raise funds for the Pediatric Congenital Heart Center, which has helped young people receive treatment. The Rosenthals have also provided significant funds to education programs at the Museum of Art and the Musical Society and they have a special interest in creating programs for children in Israel that encourage understanding and tolerance. Ami has also greatly impacted many young people at the collegiate level as chairman of the U-M Board of Student Publications and as a board member of the Hillel Foundation. In addition to all that the Rosenthals have done both professionally and philanthropically, they also have three sons and three grandchildren. Family is at the center of the Rosenthals' lives and they are intensely involved in their extended family as well.

I thank the Rosenthals for all that they have done for the Ann Arbor community. They serve as an example of all that individuals can do to help the greater good. This award is a tremendous accomplishment and it is certainly well deserved. For all that they have done and for the great love they have shown to Ann Arbor, I salute the Rosenthals and extend my appreciation to them for their great contributions to the people and institutions of their community.

TRIBUTE TO NILES TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 219 FINE ARTS AND PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2007

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, today I rise to congratulate Niles Township High School District 219, which is in the Ninth District of Illinois, for being named the best fine and performing arts program in the United States by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. District 219 was singled out for its outstanding arts education programs on April 17 when it was presented with the 19th annual Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network and National School Boards Association Award at the National School Boards Association annual conference in San Francisco. Since 1989, only 38 school boards in 23 States have received this prestigious award, which recognizes achievements in arts education, from the Kennedy Center.

The Niles Township High School District 219 does not take arts education for granted. District 219 recognizes that it is fortunate to be able to dedicate \$2.1 million—or 4.5 percent—

to the art programs. Students are given the opportunity to take a range of classes and instruction and even drive the arts curriculum that is offered.

With such commitment to the arts by the school, faculty, and students, the arts programs continually receive honors and awards from noteworthy organizations. For example, Niles North High School, located in District 219, has been honored three times with the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, NARAS, designation as a Grammy Signature School. District 219's theater programs have been invited twice by the American High School Theater Festival to perform at the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland. And, numerous arts teachers have received "teacher of the year" honors.

Madam Speaker, I am so proud of District 219 because it understands the importance of bringing the wonders of the arts to a broader community, especially to our young adults. Niles Township High School District 219 is truly a model for arts education in Illinois and nationwide. Once again, I congratulate them on their latest achievement.

[From the Chicago Tribune, Apr. 25, 2007]

ONE FINE FINE-ARTS PROGRAM: SCHOOLS' DEDICATION PAYS OFF IN A NATIONAL AWARD FOR PROGRAMS AND IMMEASURABLE BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

(By Lisa Black)

On any given day at Skokie's two public high schools, you might find a student stretching goat skin over a hand-crafted drum, or a math class learning geometric concepts through art mosaics.

A fashion class could be designing costumes for the schools' elaborate plays and musicals, while others listen to a renowned resident artist.

At Niles North and Niles West High Schools, the diverse collection of students celebrates the arts with a passion more in keeping with the reverence for football in West Texas.

At home, more than half the students speak a language other than English—led by Korean, Urdu, Assyrian, Spanish, Tagalog and Russian—yet when it comes to the arts, they share a language.

Now, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., has singled out Niles Township High School District 219 and its school board for having the nation's best arts program, calling it "a model for arts education in Illinois and throughout the country."

The Kennedy Center presented the award, along with \$10,000, during the National School Boards Association's annual conference in San Francisco last week.

"It's an amazing accomplishment," said Lori Real, fine-arts teacher at Niles North, as her students painted on silk screens. She pointed out handcrafted African instruments, called dumbek drums, that her students also are working on.

"The arts provide that hands-on experience our students crave," Real said. "It's that hands-on experience of connecting with yourself. I think we're kind of a disconnected society now."

The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is a public-private partnership that has given out the award for 19 years, basing its decision on a school district's quality and breadth of programs, student involvement and parent support, quality of teaching, and partnerships with the community.

Students filled the gymnasiums at both Skokie campuses Friday, cheering student artists, actors, musicians, dancers and their teachers.

"This is the first time I think we had a fine-arts assembly," said a delighted school board President Robert Silverman. "The kids in fine arts were on the gym floor being recognized. I think it made them feel terrific."

While athletes may rule the roost at other schools, in District 219, it's the arts students who get the most attention.

"It's nice to have a few of my jock friends come to see a production and really be blown away," said Clayton Fox, 18, of Skokie, president of the Niles North Thespian Troupe.

The arts have long been treasured in District 219, but in 2004 the school board decided to push the program to a higher level by creating a position of fine-arts director. Before that, the position combined the job of director for the English and Fine Arts Departments, officials said.

The 4,800-student district pulls from a robust tax base in Skokie, Lincolnwood, Morton Grove and Niles and devotes \$2.1 million—or about 4.5 percent of its annual instructional budget—to the arts. That's about \$442 per student, according to district figures. That compares to arts spending of 2 to 3 percent of school budgets statewide, according to a 2005 survey of school administrators.

In 2006 District 219 spent \$17,422 per pupil in operating expenses, ranking it third among all districts in statewide. High school districts spent an average \$12,365 per pupil, according to the Illinois State Board of Education.

Within the past two years the District 219 equipped both schools with \$250,000 fine-arts resource laboratories, each with 25 computers, keyboards, a teacher workstation and specialized art and music software. Before that, the district completed black box theaters at each school. They are small, unadorned rooms with dark floors and curtained walls that provide an intimate and versatile performing space.

Some District 219 teachers and students said they felt a bit guilty about the award, because it reminds them of the disparities between their school and the less affluent. Real, who taught in the Chicago Public Schools for 12 years, said District 219 participates in student exchange programs with inner-city schools.

The Kennedy Center judges noted that the depth of courses allows students to take art classes during all four years of high school and that many programs are student-driven, said Barbara Shepherd, director of the center's national partnerships division.

On a recent afternoon at Niles North, students in jeans and flip-flops plunked down on band room chairs, lifted their strung instruments and dove into a Brahms piece. Their no-nonsense orchestra director, Pam Hendrix, grabbed a late slip from a new arrival without missing a stroke of her baton.

The district has just added guitar lessons and digital piano to its music program, "filling a niche for students who don't fit into traditional band and choir," Hendrix said later. "The kids want to jam."

In the same classroom wing, Tim Ortmann led a drama class for students with physical and mental disabilities in the black box theater.

Ortmann, the school's theater director, led his students through sweeping motions and vocal exercises, prompting giggles when he asked students to say, then sing the phrase, "Open-Pit barbecue sauce."

"Do I have to come and push your tummy?" he joked when one student's song came out high-pitched and breathless.

Niles North and Niles West students present about eight musicals and plays at each campus per year, designing their own